Gutter Magic
Issue #3 of 4
22-Page Comic Script
By Rich Douek

PAGE ONE

PANEL 1
Blacktooth is leaning against a large set of double doors. He's taking a drag on a cigar. Looks bored. There's a small table next to the door, with several knickknacks on it.

LETTERER: All dialogue in panels 1-4 is coming from behind the door - balloon tails should end in bursts, like so: http://www.balloontales.com/tips/inside/icon.gif

VICTOR (OP): Do you realize what you've done?

VICTOR (OP): Do you have the slightest idea?

PANEL 2
Same shot, Blacktooth rolls his eyes and exhales.

VICTOR (OP): I told you the last time, this… this… fantasy of yours was over!

VICTOR (OP): Finished!

PANEL 3
Blacktooth picks up a knickknack from the table, maybe a small figurine, and examines it.

CINDER (OP): For once, Victor, just listen to me!

PANEL 4
Blacktooth takes another drag, nonchalantly slipping the knickknack into his pocket.

VICTOR (OP): Listen to what? Another scheme? Some big, master plan?

PANEL 5

Inside the room where Cinder and Victor are arguing. Victor is standing, leaning heavily on a desk. Cinder has his back turned to Victor, arms crossed.

VICTOR: I should just hand you over to her, right this second.

VICTOR: Do you have the slightest clue what the Morgue did to me? What she's holding over my head now?

PANEL 6

Cinder wheels on Victor, pointing a finger at him.

CINDER: Well maybe it's about time you had something at stake, too!

CINDER: Do you have any idea what its like, watching you all, year after year, with the <u>world</u> at your fingertips?

PAGE TWO

PANEL 1
Pull back, Cinder's making his argument – arms spread wide for effect, still seething with anger.

CINDER You can fly, Victor. You can hold fire in your hand like I hold an apple. You could move mountains if you wanted.

CINDER: But you throw parties. You conjure up music, wine, pretty lights. Whatever it takes to outdo the last one. And you call me pathetic?

PANEL 2
Victor shouts at Cinder.

VICTOR: She's got my soul, Cinder! My soul! You could at least pretend like that means something to you.

PANEL 3
Cinder is taken aback,

CINDER: I… I didn't mean for you to…

PANEL 4
Victor is standing straight now, his hand extended, wreathed in energy. He looks a bit shaken. Across the room, a bottle of liquor levitates, bathed with the same energy.

VICTOR: Then you shouldn't have set foot in my tower. You must have known what you'd bring with you.

PANEL 5
From across the room, Victor pours himself a glass of liquor.

VICTOR: But none of that matters, does it?

VICTOR: So long as you get what you want.

PANEL 6
The glass floats toward Victor. He has regained his composure.

VICTOR: Well, what I want is you, out of my life. For good.

VICTOR: I'm going to finish this drink.

PAGE THREE

PANEL 1
Victor, drink in hand, opens the door to leave

VICTOR: And if you're still here when I'm done, I'm going to summon her.

VICTOR: And then you can both go to hell together.

PANEL 2
Outside the room now, Victor walks past Blacktooth, who leans nonchalantly next to the door.

BLACKTOOTH: Nice party.

VICTOR: Shove it, goblin.

PANEL 3
Cinder stands in the doorway, fuming mad. Blacktooth looks up at him, a twinge of concern on his face.

BLACKTOOTH: Well, guess we should be on our way--

CINDER: Yeah. We're going to the spire.

PANEL 4
Cinder brushes past Blacktooth, almost ignoring him. Blacktooth is talking to Cinder's back.

BLACKTOOTH: We'll need an airship.

CINDER: Victor has an airship.

BLACKTOOTH: Look, I'm not sympathizing with him or anything, but...

PANEL 5
Blacktooth grabs Cinder’s arm, trying to turn him around so he can look him in the face. Cinder’s not budging.

BLACKTOOTH: ...you crashed his party, nearly got him killed by the Morgue, and now you want to steal his airship?

BLACKTOOTH: You’re taking this a bit far.

PANEL 6
Cinder continues down the hall, not looking back.

CINDER: He’s used to it.

PAGE FOUR

PANEL 1

Sweeping, establishing shot of a marina near the uptown towers, at dusk. Various yachts and exotic boats lie in the harbor, while tall, metal towers with cranes and elevators tower over them - these are the airship moorings, and several large and small airships are docked there. An elevator on the closest mooring is about halfway up.

CINDER (CAP): Meet me at the Kips Bay moorings, tomorrow.

CINDER (CAP): Bring a gun, Blacktooth. Biggest you can find.

CINDER (CAP): One more thing.

PANEL 2

Interior of the elevator. Cinder, Blacktooth and Ratcatcher are riding inside. Blacktooth and Cinder are looking up. Ratcatcher's paying attention to the huge duffel bag slung over Blacktooth's shoulder - it's taller than he is, looks heavy and bulky.

CINDER (CAP): We're going to need the Ratcatcher.

RATCATCHER: Where'd you get that thing?

BLACKTOOTH: I know a guy.

RATCATCHER: Bull.

PANEL 3

Ratcatcher leans towards Blacktooth - almost whispering in his ear. Ratcatcher wears a sinister smile, like he's gloating. Blacktooth's doing his best to ignore him.

RATCATCHER: There's maybe a dozen of those in the city. You ripped it off.

BLACKTOOTH: Did not.

RATCATCHER: You did. Crawled through one of your stinking goblin tunnels and ripped it off like a common thief.

PANEL 4
Blacktooth turns to Ratcatcher, annoyed. Ratcatcher's not having any of it.

BLACKTOOTH: I told you, I know--

RATCATCHER: Except you don't. Oh, you act like it.

RATCATCHER: Like if you say it enough, it'll be true.

PANEL 5
Ratcatcher gives a sneering grin.

RATCATCHER: But anyone worth knowing in this town don't do business with you filthy little green --

PANEL 6
Blacktooth looks a bit flustered at this point... Ratcatcher's wearing a mean grin, and Cinder has his eyes aimed up, looking where the floor indicator would be.

CINDER: Shut up, 'Catcher.

PAGE FIVE

PANEL 1
Now, it's Blacktooth's turn to grin.

CINDER (OP): You're here to do a job, not to be a prick.

PANEL 2
The elevator hits the fourth floor -maybe just show the floor indicator above the doors, with the arrow pointed at 4.

CINDER: Now get to it.

PANEL 3
Ratcatcher stands before two thuggish looking guards. He's puffed up, looking imperious. He holds up a grubby but officially sealed permit in his hand. Maybe this is a wide panel, splitting the page with above and three below - splitting the scene, and maybe showing some vague airship shapes and catwalks behind the guards.

CINDER (CAP): Make it look good.

RATCATCHER: Public health matter, boys. Rat inspection.

RATCATCHER: There's plague about, n'all.

PANEL 4
Guard 1 gets in Ratcatcher's face. Ratcatcher maintains his composure.

GUARD 1: Rats? Plague? We got our own wardsman for that sort of thing.

RATCATCHER: I see. And this – wardsman – was sanctioned by the Ratcatchers Guild to deal with matters of public health and infestation?

PANEL 5
Low angle view of Ratcatcher gripping the handle of his flamethrower, the pilot light is on, and little drips of fuel sputter off. The guards look startled.

RATCATCHER: Further, I suppose you're familiar with the guild's policy on sites that refuse an official inspection?

PANEL 6
Ratcatcher cracks a grin, lit from below by the firelight.

RATCATCHER: Better safe than sorry. That's the motto when plague's about.

RATCATCHER: I'd stand well back, if I were you.

PAGE SIX

PANEL 1
Cinder and Blacktooth board Victor's airship. Thinking it should be mid-sized, the airship version of a pleasure yacht. (maybe something like this? (http://images.wikia.com/finalfantasy/images/b/b0/FFIX-Airship.jpg) , redesigned to be a bit more in line with our aesthetic? What I like about it is it keeps the zeppelin look but the twin balloons allow for an open deck as opposed to a cabin) Cinder is heading for the helm, (picturing something like this, http://www.flickr.com/photos/roofless/4500692572/) while Blacktooth sets the duffel bag on the deck. Ratcatcher stays behind on the platform, and unties the mooring line.

CINDER: Nice job, 'Catcher.

RATCATCHER: You know how to fly one of these things?

CINDER: Practically grew up on one.

PANEL 2
Cinder pulls his goggles down over his eyes. He pulls a lever, and grips the wheel.

CINDER: Did you think these were just a fashion statement?

PANEL 3
The airship pulls away from the mooring. Ratcatcher waves from the platform.

RATCATCHER: Well, yeah.

RATCATCHER: Heh.

PANEL 4
Closer on Ratcatcher - the hand thats not waving is reaching into his pocket, pulling out what looks like a gun.

PAGE SEVEN

PANEL 1
Ratcatcher fires a flare gun, straight into the air.

SFX: FWOOSH

PANEL 2
As the airship heads towards the city, the flare goes up behind it.

SFX: FSSSSS

PANEL 3
The flare explodes into a grinning skull behind the airship.

SFX: BWAAAM

PANEL 4
In the back of the ship, Blacktooth points at the skull hanging in the sky behing them. Cinder, at the controls, pressing on. He’s not surprised.

BLACKTOOTH: – the hell was that?

CINDER: That would be Ratcatcher selling us out.

PAGE EIGHT

PANEL 1
Continue to track the airship across the sky, but another one looms close in the foreground, in pursuit. We're seeing mostly the bottom, can't make out to many details yet.

SHIVER (OP): Well, what do you know...

PANEL 2
On the deck of the pursuing airship - it's bigger than Victor's, more of a transport. It has an open deck, and sports a WWII Navy deck gun (http://mw2.google.com/mw-panoramio/photos/medium/50310.jpg) towards the prow. The deck is filled with Ghost Knives, armed with clubs, swords, and even a few guns. They look pissed and ready for revenge. A pair of them are manning the deck gun, while the rest are getting ready for a fight.

SHIVER (OP): ...Right on time.

PANEL 3
Closer on the helm of the ship, towards the rear of the deck. Benedict (named GK from Issue 1) and Shiver observe the scene - He's looking the crew over, she's holding a pair of binoculars in her hand.

SHIVER: This should be fun.

SHIVER: Bring us closer. Straight on.

PANEL 4
Wondering if we can do some sort of reflection shot here - Like we are seeing the back of Cinder and Blacktooth's ship reflected in the lenses of Shiver's binoculars.

SHIVER: Now, say hello.

PANEL 5
The deck gun fires with a shuddering boom.

SFX (CANNON): BOOOOOM!

PAGE NINE

PANEL 1
Cinder glances backward. Behind them, the shell explodes in an airburst near the ship, but no damage is done.

CINDER: Shit.

PANEL 2
On the deck of her ship, Shiver walks towards a trio of Ghost knives standing ready at the railing, her hands crackling with energy. The Ghost Knives are crouched, look like they’re about to jump off.

SHIVER: Ready boys?

PANEL 3
Cinder turns the wheel and barks at Blacktooth. Blacktooth is kneeling, rummaging intently through the bag. We can’t see what’s inside yet.

CINDER: Company, Blacktooth!

BLACKTOOTH: I’m on it, I’m on it!

PANEL 4
Close on Shiver, her hand extended in a sort of “flicking” motion, like she’s tossing her keys onto a table. Magic energy surrounds her hand.

SHIVER: Off you go.

SHIVER: < wings of wind >

PAGE TEN

PANEL 1
Wide shot of both ships, the distance between them has closed considerably. The Three Ghost Knives have jumped off, buoyed by Shiver's spell as they fly through the air.

PANEL 2
Cinder looks over his shoulder and up, a bit of desperation creeping in.

CINDER: Blacktooth –

PANEL 3
Blacktooth, gritting his teeth, has hefted a WWII Browning machine gun http://world.guns.ru/userfiles/images/machine/mg59/m1919a4_1.jpg up onto the deck, behind Cinder. He's really small for it, but the tripod is wedged up against the railing or something. A belt of ammo trails off (into the duffel bag if you can fit it in)

BLACKTOOTH: I said, I'm on it.

PANEL 4
The Ghost Knives sail through the air, almost completing their arc. The two in the back look gleeful and bloodthirsty, but the lead guy sees what's coming.

GHOST KNIFE: Shit.

PANEL 5
Hero shot of Blacktooth just opening up with the Browning.

SFX (GUN): DAKKA DAKKA DAKKA

PAGES ELEVEN-TWELVE

PANEL 1 (BIG PANEL ACROSS BOTH PAGES)
Big, double page panel of the airships in combat. Blacktooth's machine gun rakes the deck of Shiver's ship, while her deck gun tears a hole in the side of Cinder's. The Ghost Knives with guns return small arms fire. They're getting close to the Chrysler Building. Cinder is working the controls, slamming the throttle to ahead full. Shiver is howling in glee, using her magic to send more Ghost Knives over.

SFX: DAKKA DAK

SFX: KABOOM!

CINDER: Keep them off us! We're almost there!

SHIVER: You'll have to do better than that!

The rest of the panels can go across the bottom of both pages.

PANEL 2
Shiver leaps towards the ship, surrounded by energy, along with Benedict, and a few more Ghost Knives. Her front hand is thrust forward, palm-first, projecting a magical shield. Blacktooth's bullets ricochet harmlessly off of it.

SHIVER: < etheric shield! >

PANEL 3
Blacktooth shouts over his shoulder, as a Ghost Knife grabs him by the shoulder.

BLACKTOOTH: Look out!

PANEL 4
Cinder has drawn his gun and knife, and turned. We can see a pair of Ghost Knives overwhelming Blacktooth as the rest surge forward.

CINDER: Just hold on, Blacktooth!

PANEL 5
The Ghost Knives lunge. Cinder shoots one of them while he parries the blow of another one.

SFX: KATHOOM!

CINDER: This won't take long.

PANEL 6
Benedict lands a blow on Cinder's head with a club, staggering him.

SFX: CHOKK!

BENEDICT: Agreed.

PAGE THIRTEEN

PANEL 1
Bleeding from the side of his head, Cinder kneels on the deck, scrambling towards us. His hands are empty - he's dropped his weapons. Benedict towers behind him, drawing a curved knife.

BENEDICT: Of course...

PANEL 2
Benedict has Cinder by the hair, pulling him upwards.

CINDER: Ngh.

PANEL 3
The tip of the Ghost Knife's blade is pressed against the glass on Cinder's goggles - little cracks have started to appear.

BENEDICT: ...there's no real hurry, either.

SHIVER (OP): Now, now.

PANEL 4
Shiver is on the deck of Cinder's ship, along with some Ghost Knives. One Ghost Knife is holding Blacktooth's arms behind his back.

SHIVER: Wait your turn, Benedict.

PAGE FOURTEEN

PANEL 1
Shiver sneers at Cinder. She has her razor out.

SHIVER: I was going to bring you in alive, you know.

SHIVER: Not that I had to.

PANEL 2
Shiver pulls Cinder's goggles off.

SHIVER: But you've cost me, Cinder. You've cost me time. Men.

PANEL 3
Shiver smacks Cinder, hard, with a backhand.

SHIVER: Not to mention a goddamned hole in my head.

PANEL 4
Cinder looks up, a defiant kind of grin on his face. A bit of blood drips from the side of his mouth.

CINDER: Didn't slow you down for long.

PANEL 5
Shiver returns the grin.

SHIVER: Nothing does.

SHIVER: It <u>was</u> quite the chase.

PAGE FIFTEEN

PANEL 1
Shiver draws her razor down the side of her face, leaving a thin line of blood.

SHIVER: If I'm being honest, I haven't felt so alive, since...

SHIVER: ...well, since I was alive.

PANEL 2
Shiver plants a kiss right on a surprised Cinder's lips.

SHIVER: So, thanks for that.

PANEL 3
Shiver pulls back, raising the blade, ready to swipe.

SHIVER: I'm still going to carve you up, though.

PANEL 4
A ghost knife has grabbed Shiver's shoulder, pointing excitedly into the distance, just as she's about to cut Cinder.

GHOST KNIFE: Uh... boss.

SHIVER: What?

GHOST KNIFE: Look!

PANEL 5
Everyone on deck is looking at the sky, mixed feelings of shock and fear, except for Cinder, who's smiling. Blacktooth looks at the sky, agape.

BLACKTOOTH: Well...

PAGE SIXTEEN

PANEL 1
A dragon barrels down towards the two ships, with death in it's eyes.

BLACKTOOTH (CAP): ...this should be fun.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

PANEL 1
The dragon rakes the deck with fire as everyone scrambles. Cinder and Blacktooth have both slipped free.

SFX: SHOOOOOM

PANEL 2
Cinder runs toward the controls, with Blacktooth close behind.

BLACKTOOTH: You knew that was going to happen!

CINDER: I told you to bring the biggest gun you could find.

PANEL 3
Back at the controls, Cinder pushes a lever all the way forward. Blacktooth is watching his back. Most of the Ghost Knives are toast, but Shiver is picking herself up from the deck, merely singed.

CINDER: Now hold on!

PAGE EIGHTEEN

PANEL 1
The burning ship lurches toward the Chrysler building. Cinder shouts over his shoulder, with a grim smile.

CINDER: With a little luck, we just might make it!

PANEL 2
Blacktooth points up at the dragon as it wheels around in the sky, coming in for another run. Behind Blacktooth, we can see Shiver has regained her feet.

BLACKTOOTH: To hell with luck, Cinder!

BLACKTOOTH: We need speed!

PANEL 3
Shiver turns to face the dragon, looking up into the sky. She looks haggard, but she's smiling. Cinder is shouting at her over his shoulder.

SHIVER: I want to kill you Cinder.

CINDER: What are you talking about, Shiver? Get down!

PANEL 4
Shiver addresses Cinder over her shoulder, though her eyes are still looking upward.

SHIVER: I want to kill you. <u>Me.</u>

SHIVER: I want your body whole.

SHIVER: Mostly.

PANEL 5
Shiver gathers her power. She's glowing, levitating. She has her razor out - energy crackles around her, whipping her hair around. Behind her, we can see the Chrysler building looming large.

SHIVER: And I'll get it, believe me.

SHIVER: Now... run.

PAGE NINETEEN

PANEL 1
Cinder and Blacktooth run for their lives, towards the prow of the ship - in silhouette, Shiver rises into the air behind them. Behind her, the dragon looms.

CINDER: Hurry! She's not kidding!

PANEL 2
Shiver smirks, holding the razor at her ear.

SHIVER: And as for you, my pretty...

PANEL 3
The dragon looks surprised.

SHIVER: "...let's see how well you bleed."

PANEL 4
Big Boom. The dragon, in its death throes, plows into the deck, Cinder and Blacktooth take a Die Hard-style leap off the prow, just as it's crashing through the gallery windows of the Chrysler building.

SHIVER: < drown in blood!! >

SFX: KABOOM!

PANEL 5
The dying dragon, and the remains of the ship plummet towards the ground, along with one last look at Shiver, who's smiling all the way down with black blood spilling out of her slit throat.

PAGE TWENTY

PANEL 1
Cinder and Blacktooth are flat on the floor, surrounded by debris and shattered glass.

CINDER: >Cough< Well, this must be the place.

BLACKTOOTH: It better be.

PANEL 2
The pair pick themselves up off the floor. They are in a large room, but at this point all we can see are the shattered windows behind them. Cinder dusts off his shoulders, while Blacktooth reaches into his pocket for a smoke.

BLACKTOOTH: You sure about this?

PANEL 3
Blacktooth lights a cigar. He looks a bit nervous. Cinder reassures him.

BLACKTOOTH: Pretty much every wizard we've met since this whole thing started has been trying to kill us.

CINDER: It's like you said at Mary's.

CINDER: We'll just put this fancy gun to his head, and --

PANEL 4
Cinder looks down at his empty holster, realizing that he dropped his gun on the ship.

CINDER: Damn.

PANEL 5
Blacktooth holds out Cinder's pistol, handle first.

BLACKTOOTH: Heh.

BLACKTOOTH: Gotta keep track of everything for you, don't I?

PANEL 6
Cinder holds the pistol up, smiling.

CINDER: Don't know what I'd do without you.

CINDER: Now, let's go meet this Oppenheimer.

PAGE TWENTY ONE

PANEL 1
We can see now that Cinder and Blacktooth are in a huge, cavernous room, as though most of the spire was hollow - the walls curve upwards into darkness, and we can see huge banks of machinery and magical apparatus cluttering the scene. Catwalks crisscross the upper levels of the chamber. This is the lab of labs, dwarfing the one we saw in issue one. Cinder and Blacktooth are in the foreground, very small.

CINDER: He's got to be in here somewhere.

PANEL 2
We see a hand gripping the arm of a metal chair. One finger bears a ring with an inscription in Hindi, around a gemstone

OPPENHEIMER: Yes.

PANEL 3
We see a pair of old, chapped lips wrinkle into a smile.

OPPENHEIMER: <u>Yes.</u>

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

PANEL 1
Cinder and Blacktooth look up, surprised, as we see Oppenheimer in full for the first time. He is suspended above them, hooked up to an apparatus that looks like it's part throne, part life support machinery. Tubes run in and out of his body, and cables snake across the room to supply power. The thing is attached to a huge, metallic arm that goes up to the ceiling, which would allow it to move freely around the chamber. As for his body, Oppenheimer is very old - but there is still vigor in his eyes.

OPPENHEIMER: I am here.